

Acquisition Reform Success Story



SR-71

Program Manager: Capt Mike Zimmerman
DAC: Maj Gen Richard Scofield
Contractor: Lockheed Martin Skunkworks
Contractor PM: Mr. Mike Olenik

Program Description

The SR-71 is an all weather day/night reconnaissance platform that offers global reach and survivable penetration of heavily defended areas. The Air Force retired the weapon system from active service in FY89. With delays in follow-on programs, in FY95 Congress directed the Air Force, through the Defense Airborne Reconnaissance Office (DARO), to reactivate the capability with two operational aircraft and sensors.

How Streamlining Made a Difference

Congressional guidance and \$100 million funding were provided in the 1995 Defense Authorization Act for the reactivation of the SR-71 weapon system. Air Force directed the program management function be provided by ASC/RAB at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH. Three days after receipt of funding, the five person program office had the prime integrating contractor, Lockheed Martin, on contract. The hardware (aircraft, sensors, and support equipment) had been in wide spread storage for over five years. Locating all this unique equipment and the specialized personnel to perform the reactivation was a Herculean effort. Using an existing contract and a management style that is fast becoming the norm in Air Force acquisition, this team had the first aircraft ready for flight within three months. They then delivered Air Combat Command the first operationally ready and deployable aircraft six months later and the second aircraft five months after that.

Measure	Result
SPO Size	5
Time to Contract	3 days
Projected Program Savings	\$27.5M

Bottom Line: In less than 11 months from funding (over two fiscal years), this cadre of specialists returned two airframes from retirement to full operational capability for far less dollars than was authorized in the first fiscal year alone.

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